

Lake County plans meeting for CDBG applicants

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The Lake County Planning Commission and Federal Grants Office staff will host a mandatory meeting for nonprofit organizations and community governments that seek federal fiscal year 2011 Community Block Grant Program and Home Investment Partnership Program funding from the county.

The meeting will be at 10 a.m. April 15 at the Lake County Planning Commission Office, 125 E. Erie St. in Painesville.

Lake County Planning Commission Director Jason Boyd, who last year was asked by county commissioners to oversee the programs for the county, said the meeting will have two initial purposes.

The first is because the CDBG/Home programs are transitioning to a new office,

and the forum will be used as an opportunity for a meet-and-greet. The meeting also offers a chance to discuss the rules for the programs moving forward.

"We're starting fresh with the transition," Boyd said. "The projects currently running are from the old administration. I want to have a fresh start with the new parameters." Most communities that have CDBG programs already have this type of pre-application briefing, he said.

"We're going to start doing this and we're trying to get the word out the best we can," Boyd said.

The applications will have a new format this year and will be due May 20, he said. They will require more detailed measurements of activities and outcomes in response to HUD guidance received by the county.

With federal government leaders likely to

cut funding for these programs, Boyd said, future recipients need to know that the amount of funding might not be the same as in the past.

For fiscal year 2010, the county was allotted about \$1.5 million. However, Boyd guesses funding could be cut 20 percent or even more for fiscal year 2011, which starts Oct. 1 and runs through Sept. 30, 2012.

Both funding sources are provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which also sets specific guidelines on how the funds can be allocated.

In general, such funds are used to help low- or moderate-income residents and senior citizens.

Communities, organizations or individuals that request the federal funds can apply to the county, which then determines

whether a project is eligible for funding. The completed plan then is submitted to HUD.

Only two communities are not eligible to be part of the county's CDBG/Home program, Boyd said.

They are Waite Hill, because the community is considered wealthy under HUD guidelines, and the city of Mentor, which is currently considered an entitlement community by HUD and has its own program.

Mentor Economic Development Director Ronald M. Traub said discussions with HUD officials have indicated Mentor will continue to be a entitlement community with a CDBG program, despite the city dropping below 50,000 population during the 2010 Census.

"At this point, we're comfortable with that determination," Traub said.